rate of excise duty. There is also, of course, a considerable evasion in excise duty. In fact, among the taxes it is the one tax area where assesses are very evasion-prone. So, we have to tighten administration in central excise.

श्री अबू आसिम आजमी: Sir, thank you very much. मैं आपके माध्यम से ऑनरेबल मिनिस्टर से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि अप्रैल से अक्टूबर 2004-2005 और अप्रैल से अक्टूबर 2003-2004 में इनकम टैक्स डिपार्टमेंट ने कुल कितने रेड किए, उनमें अनएकाउंटेड वेल्थ कितनी बरामद की गई और कितने केसेज बने? मैं उनसे यह जानना चाहता हूं।

†[**شری ابو عاصم اعظمی:** Sir, Thank you very much میں آپ کے ماد ھیم سے آنریبل منسٹری سے یہ جاننا چاہتا ہوں کہ اپریل سے اکتوبر 2004-2005 اور اپریل سے اکتوبر 2003-2004 میں انکم ٹیکس ڈیپارٹمنٹ نے کُل کتنے ریڈ کیے، ان میں انا کا وسٹڈ ویلتھ کتنی برآمد کی گئی اور کتنے کیسیز بنے؟ میں ان سے یہ جاننا چاہتا ہوں۔]

श्री सभापति: यह जानकारी कैसे मिलेगी? नेक्स्ट क्वैश्चन।

Amendment of Competition Act, 2002

*82. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:††

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Competition Act, 2002;

(b) what steps Government propose to undertake to ensure that the Competition Commission will be run professionally; and

(c) whether Government have undertaken any consultation process with various stakeholders, if so, who are the stakeholders consulted?

THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) to (c) The Competition Act, 2002 was enacted following

†[]Transliteration in Urdu Script.
††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Santosh Bagrodia.

recommendations of the High Level Committee on Competition Policy and Law set up under the Chairmanship of Shri S.V.S. Raghavan after facilitating consultations with stakeholders. However, certain provisions of the Act were challenged in a Writ Petition filed by Shri Brahm Dutt before the Supreme Court. The Apex Court delivered its Judgement on the Petition on 20.01.2005 closing the Writ Petition and declining to pronounce on the matters argued before it, leaving open all questions regarding the validity of the enactment to be decided after the amendment of the Act. Appropriate amendments to the Competition Act are under examination to address the legal challenge and facilitate the full functioning of the Commission.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Competition Commission is very important, particularly, when the economy is opening up and globalisation is taking place. A number of large units have made cartelisation. So, to save the consumer from the onslaught of these cartels, this Commission has to start functioning. Under statutory notification, it was established in October, 2003. An Officer was also appointed. But it appears that despite it being a very technical subject, we don't have enough trained staff. No powers have been given to this Commission. No training has been given. Whereas, in other countries, Sir, hundreds of officers are sent to different countries for training. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what efforts are being made to start this Commission immediately, even if some amendments have to be made. That is a continuous process. For that, you can't make the Commission standstill.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Sir, after the Competition Commission was put in place in October, 2003, certain provisions of the Act and rules were challenged first in the Chennai High Court and then in hon. Supreme Court. Hon. Supreme Court had made some observations. The issue related to this are the issues of constitution of the Selection Committee, the procedure adopted for the selection of the members and certain judicial powers. So, because of all this, the Government had to file an affidavit before the hon. Court, but still the hon. court has not taken any view on the affidavit filed by the Government. The inter-ministerial consultations are going on, and we shall be taking a view on this very soon.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, my second supplementary is that there is a MRTP Commission. There is so much confusion in the minds

of industrialists in India and MNCs whether this MRTPC is going to be merged, whether it is still functioning, what is happening to the expenditure which is being incurred on this MRTPC and things like that. Maybe, there was a court case. But I don't think, the court has ever said that 'don't function'. The functioning of the Competition Commission has not been stopped by the court. Somebody might have raised some issues. But till the order is passed by the court, the Competition Commission should be allowed to function. So what I would like to know from the hon. Minister is, that to make it functional, we should not delay it any more. Even if the consultation is going on, we want our colleague to give us a timeframe by which this Commission will start functioning, what will happen to the officers already appointed, how quickly will the other officers be appointed, how quickly trained people will be taken into it and what kind of training will be given.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Sir, when the MRTP Act was passed, the national and international priorities were different. Today, the entire economic scenario has changed. The MRTP Commission mainly curbed monopolies, concentration of wealth in certain hands, whereas, the Competition Commission is supposed to encourage competition, a free and healthy competition and curb all those things which become a hindrance to a fair competition. Sir, there is no intention of the Government to delay the constitution or the functioning of the Competition Commission in a free and fair manner. The inter-ministerial consultations are going on, and although it is very difficult to give a definite timeframe, but we feel that the issue would be resolved very soon.

Subsidy on kerosene

*83. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:†
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Oil Marketing Companies subsidized PDS kerosene by about Rs. 12 per litre and combined with subsidies on domestic LPG, the expenditure was about Rs. 18000 crore in 2004-2005;

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Vijay J. Darda.